

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) is required by statute [RSMo 173.030 (7)] to conduct, in consultation with the state's public four-year institutions, technical colleges, and community colleges, a review every five years of the mission of each institution in Missouri's public system of higher education. The purpose of the review, as set forth in the statute, "is to insure that Missouri's system of higher education is responsive to the state's needs and is focused, balanced, cost-effective, and characterized by programs of high quality as demonstrated by student performance and program outcomes."

Context for Mission Review

In July 2008, the CBHE adopted "*Imperatives for Change: Building a Higher Education System for the 21st Century*" (IFC) as the statewide coordinated plan for Missouri's higher education system. It is a public plan to promote improvement in all sectors of higher education and to establish public reporting about the priorities and performance of the entire system. Mission review of public institutions is central to supporting the goals of *Imperatives for Change* and is critical to ensuring optimal performance, transparency, and public accountability for the state's system of higher education.

Formal mission review of public institutions began in fall 1995. Annual reports were provided to the CBHE on the overall success of the system in addition to contributions of each institution in meeting their mission implementation plans. For several years, no mission reviews were conducted due to leadership turnover and limited staffing. With the addition of academic affairs staff and the adoption of *Imperatives for Change* as a foundation for improving higher education through coordinated planning, the CBHE reintroduced mission review in December 2008 as a phased collaborative initiative between the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) and all public institutions.

The CBHE identified the following benefits as a foundation for reinstituting a formal mission review process:

- Production of a current profile of the higher education system in Missouri
- Identification of best practices to better disseminate information about institutional successes
- Measurement of progress using agreed-upon benchmarks
- Identification of unique programmatic strengths of each institution while exploring potential synergies – especially regionally but also statewide
- Identification and promotion of opportunities for collaboration
- Providing an objective platform for finding and justifying increased funding

Mission Review Process

In the first phase of the mission review process, MDHE staff reviewed mission documents submitted by institutions, which typically consisted of a current mission statement, a vision statement, core institutional values, strategic planning documents, and the CBHE-approved statewide mission. The staff also used the documents provided by the institutions to highlight areas of excellence and to assess alignment with statewide goals outlined in *Imperatives for Change*. MDHE staff developed a uniform procedure to analyze and report on each institution's CBHE-approved statewide mission, strategic plan,

official inventory of academic programs offered, partnership inventory of collaborative relationships with outside stakeholders and organizations, and support for critical state needs and priorities based on results of a crosswalk between the mission documents and the IFC goals and indicators. The appendices at the end of this final report outline the methodology and criteria that were used to conduct the mission review of each public institution.

Toward the end of 2009, MDHE staff completed the first phase of mission review, generated preliminary findings, and prepared draft reports for all institutions. Each institution had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft reports before the final performance report was written. Many institutions submitted additional materials to address areas of concern. After receiving input from the institutional leaders, MDHE staff collaborated with them to ensure the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the data reviewed. Staff then revised and finalized a mission review report for each institution.

In the course of conducting mission reviews, community college leadership requested that MDHE review the mission of the community colleges as a collective sector based on a new mission statement proposed by the Missouri Community Colleges Association (MCCA). MDHE staff conducted that supplemental review and communicated the findings to the institutions for comments and clarifications. Their input was incorporated into the final mission review report for each institution.

Summary of Findings

The mission statements of some institutions are poorly worded and confusing. The current mission statements of some of the public universities do not align with their CBHE-approved mission. In some cases, the CBHE-approved mission on file is outdated.

The review of mission-related documents submitted to the MDHE found that the institutions lack indicators and specific performance measures to provide evidence associated with realizing their institutional missions, meeting institutional goals, and achieving programmatic excellence in areas of focus. The level of detail provided about existing partnerships and identification of opportunities for greater collaboration was limited.

Mission materials demonstrated evidence of conceptual alignment between the mission statements of many of the institutions and the statewide plan for higher education, *Imperatives for Change* (IFC). Under Senate Bill 389, public institutions were required to identify at least two indicators for measuring their performance. However, more information is needed to assess the degree of alignment between each institution's mission and the goals of IFC.

Many of the institutions did not include their admissions selectivity designation in the mission statements provided to MDHE. Additionally, there is evidence that the admissions selectivity designations established more than 15 years ago represent aspirational goals rather than actual performance. This discrepancy between aspiration and actual performance suggests the need for the CBHE to revisit the relevance of the selectivity categories.

Analysis of the official program inventory for each institution shows the need to focus on developing more academic programs in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields in order to adequately prepare the state's high-tech workforce.

Mission Review Analysis of Public Universities

The MDHE staff used a set of criteria to conduct a uniformed analysis of the documents submitted by each public university to assess how well the institution was fulfilling its assigned mission. The following are results from that assessment and recommendations that the CBHE and the universities might adopt to achieve improved performance by the Missouri public higher education institutions.

CBHE-Approved Mission Statement

MDHE staff reviewed each institution's mission statement and supporting documents and analyzed them in the context of the CBHE-approved mission for that institution. The mission statements of some institutions are poorly worded and confusing. The current mission statements of some institutions do not align with their CBHE-approved mission. In some cases, the CBHE-approved mission on file is outdated. For example, Missouri Western State University is listed as a bachelor's level open enrollment university. But since the last mission review in 2002, the institution's name was changed and it was given a statewide mission of applied learning and authorized by the legislature to offer graduate degrees. Although the CBHE designated Harris-Stowe State University as an open-admissions institution in 2003, the CBHE-approved mission on file lists the institution as moderately-selective.

Several institutions may wish to revise their institutional mission statements to better describe their primary goals, declare their aspirations, and to align their mission and vision with the CBHE-approved mission.

Strategic Plan Analysis—Overview

The state's four-year public institutions have well-defined strategic visions and comprehensive strategic plans. One area of concern is that many goals in institutional strategic plans are not linked to an accountability measure, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to assess the institution's progress toward achievement of its goals. Many institutions' strategic planning would benefit from an explicit incorporation of the larger statewide objectives, especially in relation to measuring student learning outcomes, improving completions in critical fields of study, and reporting efficiency measures such as graduation rates.

Few strategic plans provided clear explanations for how an institution's goals will benefit the state, serve the citizens of Missouri, and provide quality education to its students. In several instances there was a lack of clarity between the institution's vision and its plan for realizing that vision. Several plans provided a clear statement of what the institution aspires to, but did not clarify the means by which it seeks to achieve its goals.

Areas of Excellence

Missouri's public universities can boast about several areas of excellence that were identified in the mission review process. There is a commitment to quality by all institutions in the state's system of higher education. Of particular note is the accomplishment of Northwest Missouri State University in winning four Missouri Quality Awards between 1997 and 2008. The Missouri Quality Award is the official state recognition for excellence in quality leadership. The university also qualified twice for site visits by Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award evaluators.

Missouri's public universities offer nationally ranked academic programs with specialized professional accreditation in disciplines ranging from business to criminal justice and environmental management. Many of the institutions have received national recognition for their academic programs including: the Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Faculty Development to Enhance Undergraduate Teaching and Learning (Missouri Southern State University); and the Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Education, Science and Math (Southeast Missouri State University).

Areas of excellence also include programs for student enrichment, engagement and support services such as the Prairie Lands Writing Project at Missouri Western State University, the Missouri Academy of Science, Mathematics, and Computing at Northwest Missouri State University; and the Joseph Baldwin Academy for Eminent Young Scholars at Truman State University.

Through partnerships with the U.S. Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, the National Science Foundation, and various state agencies, Missouri public universities provide exemplary research, community service, and outreach to meet societal needs in health care, aviation and traffic safety, law enforcement training, and emergency management for rural areas.

Missouri students have made academic achievements and won national and international recognition in a variety of fields including the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition.

Program Inventory—Overview

The program inventories of Missouri's four-year public institutions are well aligned with their institutional and state-mandated missions. However, there are some areas for which further research and analysis are recommended. They include the extent of program overlap and duplication, and an analysis of enrollments, persistence rates, and completion rates that might reveal underutilized program resources.

Partnerships

All Missouri public universities have strong partnerships with other educational institutions, community groups, and business and industry. The CBHE should encourage the formation of more partnerships and collaborations to make higher education more accessible, affordable, and efficient.

Alignment between Institutional Mission and *Imperatives for Change*

Some institution's strategic planning documents are misaligned with either the institutional mission statement or the CBHE-approved mission or both. These institutions may consider updating their strategic plans to include additional learning objectives that correlate directly to the CBHE-approved mission and to the goals and objectives of *IFC*.

For many institutions, there is conceptual alignment between the primary goals of *Imperatives for Change* and the university's mission documents, but there is no direct connection to the *IFC* goals, objectives, and indicator measures. As the institutions move forward in their strategic planning cycle, they may wish to incorporate additional measurements and key performance indicators linked with the *IFC* goals and objectives, especially in areas that meet critical statewide needs.

Mission Review Analysis of Linn State Technical College

Linn State Technical College occupies a unique position in the Missouri system of higher education. The college represents an education sector by itself as the state's only public institution with a statewide mission to deliver associate degrees in specialized technical fields.

The college is fulfilling its statewide mandate. The institution's mission documents demonstrate a nuanced understanding of strategic planning, and focus on many critical elements needed to create a nurturing learning environment.

There were many impressive elements in the college's strategic plan, in particular the planning priorities and the assumptions on which they are based. The institution may benefit from reviewing both the strategic plan and the long-range goals documents in order to effectively and clearly articulate the relationship between the two.

Missouri's projected needs for a high-tech workforce are addressed by technical program offerings at the college, such as nuclear technology and biomedical engineering.

The college should promote and publicize its programs, success, and areas of excellence to the Missouri public.

Mission Review Analysis of Community Colleges

Missouri's community colleges, as distinct institutions and as a sector, provide significant contributions to the state. They are instrumental in moving the state forward in pursuit of the goals contained in the public strategic plan for higher education, *Imperatives for Change*. Community colleges provide technical and vocational programs, including associate of applied science degrees and certificate programs that support workforce development in critical fields such as health care and technology. Additionally, several Missouri community colleges offer programs in alternative energy that could contribute to economic development in their region of service.

Community colleges also provide strong general education curricula that prepare students for transfer and further study. They offer career and technical programs that prepare students for entry into or advancement in the workforce, or further study. They also are the primary providers of developmental course work and support services for learners who are underprepared for college-level work, a function crucial to increasing the educational attainment of Missourians.

The role and scope of community colleges have changed significantly over the past decade. The overall importance of the community colleges in Missouri's public system of higher education has grown as well. The community college sector is, and will continue to be, essential for achieving both national and state-level educational goals.

CBHE-Approved Mission for Community Colleges

Associate degree-granting institutions with open enrollment admissions specializing in workforce development; Missouri's lead institutions in delivering postsecondary technical education in partnership with the state's area vocational technical schools.

This mission statement was approved by the CBHE in June 1996. In October 2000, the CBHE approved the community colleges' mission implementation and targeted service initiatives for FY 2002 – FY 2006.

MCCA Proposed Community College Mission Statement

As comprehensive, open access institutions of higher learning, Missouri's community colleges serve the diverse learning, workforce, and economic development needs of their communities. This is accomplished through, but not limited to, the following:

- *Associate degrees with strong general education curriculums that meet Missouri general education requirements preparing students for transfer and further study*
- *Career and technical programs and technical/paraprofessional training for credit (via certificates and AAS degrees) that prepare students for entry into or advancement in the workforce and/or further study*
- *Developmental course work and support services for learners who are underprepared for college-level work*
- *Workforce training and certificates that upgrade skills or support retraining in both credit and non-credit formats*

- *Dynamic, customized training programs for business/industry in both credit and non-credit formats*
- *A vast array of support services for students (e.g., academic advisement, assessment, articulation, career planning and job placement, counseling, library and learning resources, and financial aid) to facilitate the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve their educational, professional, and personal goals*
- *Globalized curricula, international exchange programs, and study abroad opportunities designed to develop competencies desired in a global economy*
- *Distance learning opportunities*
- *Programs, courses, and services for special student groups, such as students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and talented and gifted persons*
- *Continuing education courses, including professional development, recreation, and personal development courses*
- *Articulated course work, dual credit, and dual enrollment opportunities for students who are prepared for college-level work*
- *Ongoing assessment of students, programs and services*
- *Advisory boards for programs and services and a broad range of opportunities for community engagement*
- *Assistance to small businesses through business development, incubation, and delivery of training for new and existing employees in small business settings*
- *Off-campus and on-campus learning experiences that prepare students to achieve career and educational goals and to succeed in a global environment*

Analysis and Alignment with CBHE-Approved Mission and MCCA-Proposed Mission

Missouri's community colleges have a well-defined mission and clear mission statement. Moreover, all community colleges have programs that align appropriately both with the current statewide mission for community colleges and with the MCCA-proposed mission statement. All institutions in the sector are fulfilling their collective statewide mission through appropriate academic and vocational programs, economic development, partnerships, and responsible stewardship of state resources.

Strategic Plan

Generally, the community colleges have well-defined strategic visions and comprehensive strategic plans, which are aligned well with both with the CBHE-approved and MCCA-proposed missions. Several institutions, however, have strategic plans needing further development. Additionally, the following overall observations apply to the community college sector:

- Few strategic plans provided clear explanations for how the college's goals will benefit the state, serve the citizens of Missouri, and provide quality education to its students.
- In many cases, strategic goals and objectives were not linked to an accountability measure, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to assess institutional achievement toward its goals.
- In several instances there was a lack of clarity between the college's vision and its plan for realizing that vision. Several strategic plans provided a clear statement of what the institution aspired to, but did not clarify the means by which to achieve its goals.

Program Inventory

The program inventories of Missouri's community colleges align with the CBHE-approved mission and with the MCCA-proposed new mission statement.

The following are areas in which further research and analysis are recommended:

- the extent of program overlap and duplication;
- the extent to which programs are delivered in partnerships with vocational and technical schools; and
- data on enrollments, persistence rates, and completion rates that might reveal under-utilized program resources.

Partnerships

All community colleges have strong partnerships with other educational institutions, community groups, and business and industry. The colleges should provide more evidence of their required partnerships with vocational and technical schools to deliver programs in their service areas. The CBHE should encourage the development of even more partnerships to make higher education more accessible, affordable, and efficient.

Alignment between *Imperatives for Change* and Institutional Mission

As a sector, there is solid alignment between *Imperatives for Change* and the community colleges' mission. Without exception, there is conceptual alignment with some *IFC* performance indicators and each institution's strategic plan. In many cases, there is strong alignment with many *IFC* indicators. As individual colleges move forward with strategic planning, they may wish to consider further strengthening the alignment with *Imperatives for Change*. This would provide further evidence of the sector's commitment to addressing statewide needs.

Analysis and Recommendation for New Community College Mission

The results of the mission review of the state's community colleges, both as individual institutions and as a sector, indicate that the community college mission statement should be revised to encompass the totality of services provided by community colleges and to further distinguish their mission from that of the public four-year institutions.

The mission statement for community colleges proposed by the MCCA better reflects the comprehensive nature of community colleges compared to the current CBHE-approved statement. However, the MCCA-proposed mission statement has some shortcomings. For example, the use of the word "comprehensive" in the context of higher education connotes an institution that grants the full range of academic degrees. Such a term would not be applicable or appropriate in assigning the mission of the community colleges.

The CBHE, MDHE staff, and the community college leadership should continue discussions leading to a draft mission statement that will better encompass the roles, functions, expectations and responsibilities of Missouri's community colleges in a changing, knowledge-based, and globally competitive economy.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- The CBHE should re-evaluate the relevance of assigning statewide missions to institutions, especially given the impact that technology has had in providing opportunities for students across the state to access academic programs through distance education. The CBHE-approved mission statements should be revised and updated because some are dated, imprecise, or obsolete.
- There is an almost uniform absence in the materials submitted by institutions about performance measures and indicators of success in meeting the mission/goals of each institution and its strategic plan. In addition, as is the case with many strategic plans, there are many elements, e.g., character development, that are difficult to measure, if they can be measured at all.
- In many cases, it is not clear how the institutions communicate their mission, goals and values to students, faculty, external stakeholders, and to the people of Missouri.
- There is a lack of evidence that many institutions sufficiently advertise or promote their success and areas of excellence to have a positive impact on the Missouri public.
- An analysis of the statewide program inventory suggests the need to put more focus on developing programs in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields to prepare the state's high-tech workforce.
- Data demonstrate that entering students at several of the universities do not meet admissions guidelines associated with the institution's selectivity designation. Seven institutions do not currently meet the requirements under the CBHE-designated admissions guidelines. This suggests that the designations are more indicative of aspirations for the characteristics of entering students rather than actual preparation of entering students. The CBHE may wish to consider the viability of having admissions selectivity designations and if reaffirmed, whether there should be consequences for institutions that do not meet the admissions requirements.
- Linn State Technical College may wish to revise its mission statement to better describe its primary goals and align its institutional mission and vision with its assigned statewide mission. There were many impressive elements in the college's strategic plan, in particular the planning priorities and the assumptions on which they are based. The institution may benefit from reviewing both the strategic plan and the long-range goals documents in order to effectively and clearly articulate the relationship between the two.
- Missouri's community colleges, as individual institutions and as a sector, fulfill the statewide CBHE-approved mission through appropriate academic and vocational programs, economic development activities, partnerships, and responsible stewardship of state resources.
- The current CBHE-approved mission for community colleges should be revised to better reflect the expanded role of community colleges in Missouri's public system of higher education. The

CBHE should direct the MDHE to work with the MCCA to revise the mission statement for the community colleges.

- Missouri State University-West Plains is not a community college in the traditional sense. It may be appropriate for the CBHE to review the institution's approved mission based on its unique status within the state's system of higher education.
- The CBHE should do further research and analysis on ways to reduce program overlap and unnecessary duplication in order to use resources more efficiently and effectively.

Based on the findings of the mission review exercise, there is a need to hold further discussions with stakeholders about aligning the mission of the institutions with the statewide strategic plan. Further discussion is also needed about specific mission focus, the relevance of assigning a statewide mission, viability of the admissions selectivity designation, and specific programmatic focus.

Appendix A: Mission Review Methodology

Methodology, Goals, and Objectives

The main purposes of mission review were to identify the unique mission and goals of each institution, and to provide feedback on ways to serve Missouri better through coordination and continuous improvement. To that end, MDHE staff sought to:

- assess current institutional mission statements against those last approved by the CBHE;
- identify the extent of alignment of the goals, strategic issues, and measures of success in *Imperatives for Change* with each institution's mission;
- identify areas for collaboration and continuous improvement in delivery of academic programs;
- identify indicators to provide evidence to outside accrediting bodies and other stakeholders of progress in achieving mission goals; and
- collect additional information about each institution to identify potential centers of excellence and partnerships.

Phase I

During Phase I of the review, MDHE staff analyzed the documents submitted by each institution within the context of *IFC* and any additional state priorities established by the CBHE. MDHE staff also reviewed CBHE board items related to mission review, the CBHE policy for conducting mission review, and the pertinent state statutes related to mission review.

MDHE staff reviewed mission documents provided by the institutions, which typically consisted of a mission statement, a vision statement, core institutional values, strategic planning documents, and the CBHE-approved mission. Staff identified major themes and intended outcomes explicit or implicit in each document, questions, issues, and other matters addressed (or not addressed) in the documents, and summarized the intent, focus, and goals of each. Using the same methodology, staff also examined each institution's program inventory and partnership inventory to assess the extent to which these aligned with both the institution's mission and the CBHE-approved mission. MDHE staff also identified areas of convergence between *IFC* goals and objectives and institutional mission documents.

MDHE staff next created a "crosswalk" to identify areas of convergence between *IFC* goals and objectives and institutional mission documents. The crosswalk report was color coded to indicate an exact correlation, one that is both conceptually aligned and explicitly stated in the institution's mission documents; the institution's mission documents and the *IFC* are aligned conceptually, and the institution's mission documents and the *IFC* express the concept in similar, although not explicit or exact, language; or only conceptual alignment with a goal, objective, or indicator listed in *IFC*. The crosswalk also identified when an *IFC* indicator was not listed as an institutional priority or was not reported in the institution's mission documents.

This information was reviewed further by senior staff, and compiled into a set of working papers. The working papers were distilled into summary reports that sought to identify broad themes common to many institutions or sectors, and also to identify concerns specific to each institution. Staff also included requests for additional information and material to address concerns not included in the initial mission documents provided by the institution. Additional information was also requested about identified areas that have potential to be centers of excellence for the institution.

Phase II

MDHE staff prepared reports of the analysis and findings for each public institution, and submitted them to the institutions for review and comment. MDHE staff and institutional leaders discussed the drafts to ensure the comprehensiveness and accuracy of each report.

The draft mission review reports contained summary analyses of the following:

- Mission statements and supporting documents provided by the institutions
- The CBHE-approved mission
- Strategic plan and supporting documents provided by the institutions
- Areas of institutional excellence and outstanding programs
- Inventory of programs offered by the institution
- Partnerships and collaborative relationships with outside stakeholders and organizations
- Alignment of institutional goals and mission with IFC goals and indicators
- Additional information needed

Phase III

MDHE staff continued to work with institutional leaders to revise and complete the mission review reports and to discuss recommendations for better aligning each institution's mission with the CBHE-approved mission. Staff also consulted with each institution to identify partnerships and opportunities for regional collaboration.

The MDHE submitted a final report summarizing the analysis of each institution and making recommendations based on the mission review findings to the CBHE for review and action.